

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 RANGOO 01390 01 OF 02 281044Z

22

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 COME-00 EB-07 INT-05 EUR-12 FEA-01

OES-06 SNM-02 DEAE-00 JUSE-00 /100 W

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R 281010Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1404

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMCONSUL MANDALAY UNN

DEA BANGKOK UNN

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK UNN

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI UNN

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU UNN

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI UNN

USLO PEKING UNN

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE UNN

AMEMBASSY SEOUL UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RANGOON 1390

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR BM

SUBJ: JOINT WEEKA #16

1. PRESIDENT NE WIN TO RETURN (CONFIDENTIAL)

PRESIDENT NE WIN WILL LEAVE ZURICH MAY 14 TO RETURN TO BURMA. VISIT OF PRESIDENT NE WIN TO NORTH KOREA, ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE MAY 4-8, HAS BEEN POSTPONED (BUT NOT CANCELLED) AT GUB REQUEST, REPORTEDLY ON MEDICAL GROUNDS.

2. TABLE TENNIS GROUP VISITS DPRK (UNCLASSIFIED)

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 RANGOO 01390 01 OF 02 281044Z

"SPORTS STUDY GROUP", HEADED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BURMA TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION, LEFT RANGOON APRIL 26 FOR NORTH KOREA TO "STUDY" THIRD ASIAN TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT. COMMENT: VISIT COULD HAVE BEEN TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH PRESIDENT NE WIN'S VISIT, NOW POSTPONED (SEE PREVIOUS ITEM).

3. NGUYEN DUY TRINH PASSES THROUGH (UNCLASSIFIED)

DRV DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER NGUYEN DUY TRINH STOPPED OVER AT MINGALADON AIRPORT FOR ONE HOUR APRIL 24 ON HIS WAY BACK TO NORTH VIETNAM FROM EUROPE. HE WAS MET AT AIRPORT BY FOREIGN MINISTER U HLA PHONE; REPORT OF MEETING GIVEN PROMINENT PRESS COVERAGE.

4. MAURITANIAN ENVOY VISITS BURMA (UNCLASSIFIED)

MOHAMED OULD SIDI ALY, SPECIAL ENVOY OF PRESIDENT OF MAURITANIA, VISITED RANGOON APRIL 24-27. DURING HIS STAY ENVOY PAID COURTESY CALLS ON PRIME MINISTER SEIN WIN AND FOREIGN MINISTER HLA PHONE AND HELD SHORT DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER MFA OFFICIALS. MAURITANIAN ENVOY APPARENTLY ON GOODWILL TOUR, AND ACCORDING TO ONE MFA OFFICIAL, NOTHING OF SUBSTANCE WAS DISCUSSED DURING HIS VISIT HERE.

5. GENERAL SAN YU VISITS SHAN AND KAYAH STATES (LIMITED OFF USE)

GENERAL SAN YU VISITED SHAN AND KAYAH STATES APRIL 21-24, AND MADE USUAL ORATORY SPEECH, WHICH INCLUDED REFERENCE TO NEED FOR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO RESOLVE PROBLEM OF PETROLEUM AND DIESEL SUPPLY. (PETROLEUM SHORTAGES IN UPPER BURMA REPORTEDLY SEVERE.) HOWEVER, HE FAILED TO MENTION NARCOTICS PROBLEM, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS VISITING PRIMARY OPIUM PRODUCING AREAS OF BURMA.

6. KAREN INSURGENCY (CONFIDENTIAL)

IN LATEST OF SERIES OF INCIDENTS, PRESS REPORTED APRIL 28 THAT KAREN REBELS HAD FIRED ON RIVER LAUNCH NEAR PA-AN, KAREN STATE, KILLING 45 AND INJURING 75 OTHERS. IF THESE FIGURES CORRECT, THIS REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT ATTACK. KARENS THIS YEAR HAVE ALSO ATTACKED MAJOR TOWNS OF THATON, PAPUN, AND MUDON, AND IN GENERAL SEEM TO BE MORE ACTIVE THAN IN PAST YEARS. ONE SOURCE OF ACTIVISM

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 RANGOO 01390 01 OF 02 281044Z

MAY BE GUB ATTEMPT, UNDERWAY FOR SOME MONTHS, TO CARRY OUT "FOUR DENIAL" SCHEME IN KAREN STATE. NZHILE BOTH OUTSIDE OBSERVERS AND GUB ITSELF TEND TO CONCENTRATE ON BCP INSURGENCY, INCREASE IN KAREN INSURGENCY COULD FORCE SOME DIVERSION OF BURMA ARMY FORCES FROM ANCI-BCP CAMPAIGNS IN SHAN STATE.

7. ADDITIONAL ARMY OFFICER COMMISSIONED (UNCLASSIFIED)

IN SEPARATE CEREMONIES, THE COMMANDERS OF THE 77TH AND 99TH LIGHT INFANTRY DIVISIONS RECENTLY AWARDED 58 COMMISSIONS (29 EACH) TO UNDER-OFFICERS. COMMENT: UNDER-OFFICERS, HAVING SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED A PROBATIONARY TOUR OF DUTY, IN AN INFANTRY UNIT, AFTER GRADUATION FROM AN OFFICER CANDIDATE COURSE, ARE THEN COMMISSIONED SECOND LIEUTENANTS.

8. BAWDWIN MINE (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

GUB ANNOUNCED APRIL 27 SIGNING OF 65 MILLION DEUTSCHMARKS LONG TERM SOFT LOAN (2 PERCENT, 50 YEARS) AGREEMENT WITH FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FAMED BAWDWIN LEAD/ZINC MINE IN UPPER BURMA. MONEY WILL REPORTEDLY BE USED TO CONVERT BAWDWIN MINE, WHOSE HIGH GRADE RESERVES NEARLY EXHAUSTED, TO OPEN PIT OPERATION DESIGNED TO RECOVER LOWER GRADE ORE. SECOND LOAN AGREEMENT OF 10 MILLION DEUTSCHMARKS WAS SIGNED AT SAME TIME TO FINANCE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES FOR OTHER PROJECTS. AS WITH SIMILAR FRG LOANS, THIS IS TO BE UNTIED AND PROCUREMENT WILL BE ON BASIS OF INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC TENDER. HOWEVER, ALL PAST CONTRACTS FINANCED IN THIS MANNER HAVE GONE TO WEST GERMAN FIRMS.

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CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 01390 02 OF 02 281112Z

12

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 RANGOON 1390

9. OIL FIELD PROBLEMS (CONFIDENTIAL)

GUB IS APPARENTLY HAVING TROUBLE AT MANN AND CHAUK OIL FIELDS. AT CHAUK, TROUBLE BEGAN WHEN LARGE GROUP (ABOUT 150) OF LOCAL VILLAGERS RAIDED TANK FARM AT NEW JYENI RAIL LOADING FACILITY WITH OBJECT STEALING CRUDE, A MINOR INDUSTRY AT CHAUK. SMALL NUMBER OF SOLDIERS INTERVENED, FIRED UPON AND INJURED SEVERAL VILLAGERS IN ORDER TO END INCIDENT. AT MANN FIELD, WHICH PRODUCES MAJORITY OF BURMESE CRUDE, STRIKE INVOLVING 500 WORKERS REPORTEDLY UNDER WAY. ISSUES ARE REPORTEDLY LONG HOURS AND LOW WAGES. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN NO REPORT OF EITHER EVENT IN PRESS, THERE HAS BEEN SPATE OF EDITORIALS AND ARTICLES LATELY EXPOSING THEFT AT CHAUK AND OTHER OIL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 RANGOO 01390 02 OF 02 281112Z

FIELDS AND CALLING FOR DRASTIC MEASURES TO ELIMINATE PROBLEM.

10. MOC GROUP VISITS US (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

GROUP OF SIX OFFICIALS OF STATE-OWNED MYANMA OIL CORPORATION, HEADED BY MANAGING DIRECTOR U KYAW ZA WILL LEAVE APRIL 29 FOR 30-DAY VISIT TO US AS GUESTS OF EXXON CORPORATION. GROUP WILL ATTEND OFFSHORE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE IN HOUSTON, TULSA OIL SHOW, AND WILL TOUR A NUMBER OF EXXON INSTALLATIONS.

11. BURMA AND SINGAPORE
SIGN AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT (UNCLASSIFIED)

AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT BETWEEN BURMA AND SINGAPORE SIGNED APRIL 26. COL. KHIN OHN, DEPUTY MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT SIGNED FOR GUB WHILE MR. CHI Owyang, SINGAPORE'S AMBASSADOR TO BURMA AND THAILAND SIGNED FOR GOS. AGREEMENT OPENS WAY FOR BURMA AIRWAYS CORP. (BAC) TO BEGIN TWICE WEEKLY (MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS) SERVICE BETWEEN RANGOON AND SINGAPORE. BAC MANAGER TOLD EMBOFF THAT THIS SERVICE WOULD COMMENCE FIRST WEEK OF MAY. SINGAPORE AIRLINES HAS NO IMMEDIATE PLANS TO START FLYING TO RANGOON.

12. DANISH ASSISTANCE FOR BURMA'S FISHING INDUSTRY (LIMITED OFF USE)

GUB HAS APPROACHED DENMARK WITH REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING FISHERY RESOURCES IN ARAKAN COASTAL REGION. PROPOSAL WOULD ALLOW PRIVATE DANISH FIRM TO EXPLOIT THE WATERS ON PROFIT SHARING

BASIS WITH GUB, BUT IN KEEPING WITH GUB PHILOSOPHY, THIS ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE MADE UNDER GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT. DANISH GOVERNMENT COULD SUB-CONTRACT RESPONSIBILITY TO DANISH FISHING FIRM. GUB ALSO ASKED DENMARK TO PROVIDE DIRECT ASSISTANCE IN FORM OF TRAWLERS AND REFRIGERATION EQUIPMENT. ACCORDING TO HONORARY SCANDINAVIAN CONSUL IN RANGOON, DANISH GOVERNMENT QUITE INTERESTED IN PROPOSAL.

13. NARCOTICS: SEIZURES AND ARRESTS (UNCLASSIFIED)

REPORTED IN LOCAL PAPERS DURING THE PAST WEEK WAS THE ARREST OF NINE NARCOTICS VIOLATORS IN SIX LOCALES AND THE SEIZURE OF APPROXIMATELY KYAT 150,000 WORTH OF HEROIN, OPIUM, MORPHINE BASE AND PETHIDINE.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 RANGOO 01390 02 OF 02 281112Z

14. NARCOTICS: ANOTHER LO KIDNAPPING (UNCLASSIFIED)

BOTATAUNG REPORTED ON APRIL 23 THAT LO HSING-WAI, A YOUNGER BROTHER OF LO HSING-HAN, WAS KIDNAPPED BY THREE MEN NEAR THE NIGHT BAZAAR IN TAUNGGYI ON APRIL 21. COMMENT: WHILE THE EARLIER KIDNAPPING OF LO HSING-MIN IN JANUARY LOOKED TO BE A HOAX TO GET HIM BACK IN THE ORGANIZATION, THIS KIDNAPPING MAY BE FOR REAL. THE DRIVER OF THE CAR IN WHICH LO HSING-WAI WAS RIDING WAS FORCED OUT AND SHOT.

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